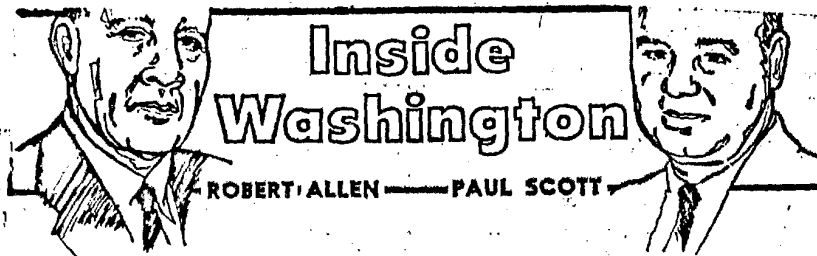


DEC 14 1967



New Key Leaders Needed

WASHINGTON — President Johnson's growing political problems within the Democratic party are being complicated by the unannounced decisions of two of its most loyal congressional backers.

Speaker John McCormack, D-Mass., and House Majority Leader Carl Albert, R-Okla., have notified the President that because of legislative pressures and personal reasons they do not wish to take on the added responsibilities of serving in two of the most important positions at the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

McCormack, who three times headed the party's platform committee, served as the convention's permanent chairman when President Johnson was nominated without opposition at Atlantic City in 1964. Representative Albert was chairman of the convention's platform committee the same year.

Since by long tradition the Speaker, if a Democrat, presides over the party's presidential nominating convention, McCormack's request for a replacement caught the White House by surprise.

A substitute for Representative Albert, because of his heart trouble, had been under consideration by the President for several weeks.

The President is also looking for a new keynoter.

Senator John Pastore, D-R.I., keynoter at the 1964 convention, is out of favor at the White House because of his public call for halting the bombing of North Vietnam.

NEED FOR COMPROMISE

Under normal conditions, President Johnson would be able to fill all three convention positions with party leaders favorable to his candidacy because of his tight control over convention arrangements.

However, Senator Eugene McCarthy's challenge for the party's nomination and Senator Robert Kennedy's opposition to his Vietnam policy make these choices more difficult.

In order to avoid widening the party's foreign policy split, several pro-Johnson senators already have urged the President to name to head the platform committee a person acceptable to all factions.

Supporters of Senator McCarthy claim his decision whether or not to support President Johnson, if renominated, depends on whether the convention adopts a plank in its platform calling for a negotiated end to the Vietnam war. If not, McCarthy is pictured as ready to bolt the Democratic party with his followers and form a third party.

THE NEW FACES

Whether President Johnson would

ever agree to such a compromise to preserve party unity is questionable.

In political discussions at the White House, the President has made it very clear he expects the convention to endorse the administration's Vietnam policies.

The President also has singled out Governors Richard Hughes, of New Jersey, and Otto Kerner, of Illinois, as two party leaders that he wants in prominent roles at the 1968 convention.

Both governors are staunch supporters of the President and have vigorously backed his Vietnam war policies despite criticism within their own states.

Governor Hughes, as chairman of the Equal Rights Committee set up at the 1964 convention, is now trying to work out a compromise solution on the representation of Negroes in state delegations that will go to Chicago.

In a move to keep southern states from bolting the party, Governor Hughes has vigorously opposed having the convention adopt a quota system that would force states to have a fixed percentage of Negroes in their delegations.

Governor Kerner, as chairman of the President's special commission probing last summer's racial riots, will have a big voice in the party's platform recommendations for fighting crime and poverty in the big cities.

A two-term governor, Kerner is being mentioned in congressional circles as a possible running-mate for President Johnson should the latter decide to offer Vice President Humphrey the secretary of state post.

CAMPAIGN BLUES

Sen. Eugene McCarthy is running into some unexpected personal problems since announcing his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Most annoying of these are calls at all hours of the night from persons wanting to discuss his candidacy or campaign. There have been hundreds of these.

One caller for a group of Democrats in California woke him at 4 a.m. to check out a rumor that he was being used by the CIA.

"We understand your candidacy was inspired by the CIA to keep college students off the streets and from participating in demonstrations and riots next summer," the caller stated.

"Oh, no," replied the half awake McCarthy. "If you take time to read any of my statements about the CIA, you would know that I would be the last one that they would ever pick for such a mission."

After that explanation, the caller hung up.

The boxed portion of this article did not appear in the NVS for 14 December 1967.